

What is claimed is:

1. A method of automatically saving communicated multimedia objects to a repository for subsequent use, the method comprising:

in response to a sent electronic message and a received electronic message,
5 identifying an embedded multimedia object or an attached multimedia object;
separating the embedded multimedia object or the attached multimedia object from the electronic message;

automatically saving the separated multimedia object to a repository for subsequent use by a user; and

10 enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use.

2. The method as in claim 1 wherein the repository includes a central repository.

15 3. The method as in claim 1 wherein the repository includes a local repository.

4. The method as in claim 1 further comprising:

determining a type of the multimedia object; and

20 automatically saving the multimedia object to the repository based on the determination of the type of the multimedia object.

5. The method as in claim 1 further comprising:

determining a type of the multimedia object; and

25 automatically not saving the multimedia object to the repository based on the determination of the type of the multimedia object.

6. The method as in claim 5 wherein the type of the multimedia object includes a non-picture image.

30 7. The method as in claim 6 wherein the non-picture image includes an emoticon.

8. The method as in claim 1 wherein the multimedia object includes an image.

9. The method as in claim 8 wherein the image includes a picture.

5 10. The method as in claim 1 wherein the multimedia object includes a music file.

11. The method as in claim 1 wherein the multimedia object includes a video file.

10 12. The method as in claim 1 wherein enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use includes enabling the user to send the multimedia object to other users using a graphical user interface.

15 13. The method as in claim 1 wherein enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use includes enabling the user to send the multimedia object to others across multiple applications using a graphical user interface that is common to the multiple applications.

20 14. The method as in claim 13 wherein the multiple applications include an instant messaging application.

15. The method as in claim 13 wherein the multiple applications include a member directory.

25 16. The method as in claim 13 wherein the multiple applications include a web page publishing application.

30 17. The method as in claim 1 wherein the automatically saved multimedia object is available for use across multiple applications using a graphical user interface that is common to the multiple applications.

18. The method as in claim 17 wherein the multiple applications include an instant messaging application.

19. The method as in claim 17 wherein the multiple applications include a member directory.

5 20. The method as in claim 17 wherein the multiple applications include a web page publishing application.

21. The method as in claim 1 wherein the sent electronic message and the received electronic message includes electronic mail.

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22. The method as in claim 1 wherein enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use includes enabling the user to select and use the multimedia object in multiple applications without having to upload the multimedia object to the repository.

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23. The method as in claim 1 further comprising:
prior to automatically saving the multimedia object, determining whether the multimedia object is stored in the repository; and
automatically saving the multimedia object in the repository if the multimedia object
20 is not stored in the repository based on the determination.

24. The method as in claim 1 further comprising:
prior to automatically saving the multimedia object, determining whether the multimedia object is stored in the repository; and
25 automatically not saving the multimedia object in the repository if the multimedia object is stored in the repository based on the determination.

25. An apparatus comprising a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a machine result in at least the following:

30 in response to a sent electronic message and a received electronic message, identifying an embedded multimedia object or an attached multimedia object;

separating the embedded multimedia object or the attached multimedia object from the electronic message;

automatically saving the separated multimedia object to a repository for subsequent use by a user; and

5 enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use.

26. A system for automatically saving communicated multimedia objects to a repository for subsequent use comprising:

10 in response to a sent electronic message and a received electronic message, means for identifying an embedded multimedia object or an attached multimedia object;

means for separating the embedded multimedia object or the attached multimedia object from the electronic message;

15 means for automatically saving the separated multimedia object to a repository for subsequent use by a user; and

means for enabling the user to select the multimedia object from the repository for subsequent use.